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WYOMING

VOL. 21 NO. 11 DEC. 1984

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

TREND SETTERS

WYOMING	Dec. '84	Nov. '84
Labor Force	252,134	250,461
Employment	235,934	236,274
Unemployment	16,200	14,187
Rate (Raw)	6.4	5.7
Rate (S.A.)	6.3	5.5
Mining Hourly Wage	$13.13	$13.40
Avg. Weekly Hours, Mining	44.4	42.9
USA		
Rate (S.A.)	7.2	7.1
Mining Hourly Wage	$11.68	$11.57
Avg. Weekly Hours, Mining	43.6	43.4
Consumer Price Index		
All Urban 1967 = 100		
U.S. City Avg.	315.5	315.3
Denver (Bimonthly)		349.4
Year Change (U.S.)	+4.0	+4.0

S.A.-Seasonally Adjusted

IN THE UNITED STATES

The number of civilians considered employed increased by 340,000 to 106.3 million in December of 1984. This is according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. Despite the increase in employment, December's unemployment rate of 7.2 percent was still higher than November's revised rate of 7.1 percent. This reflects the jump from 8.14 million unemployed in November to 8.19 million in December.

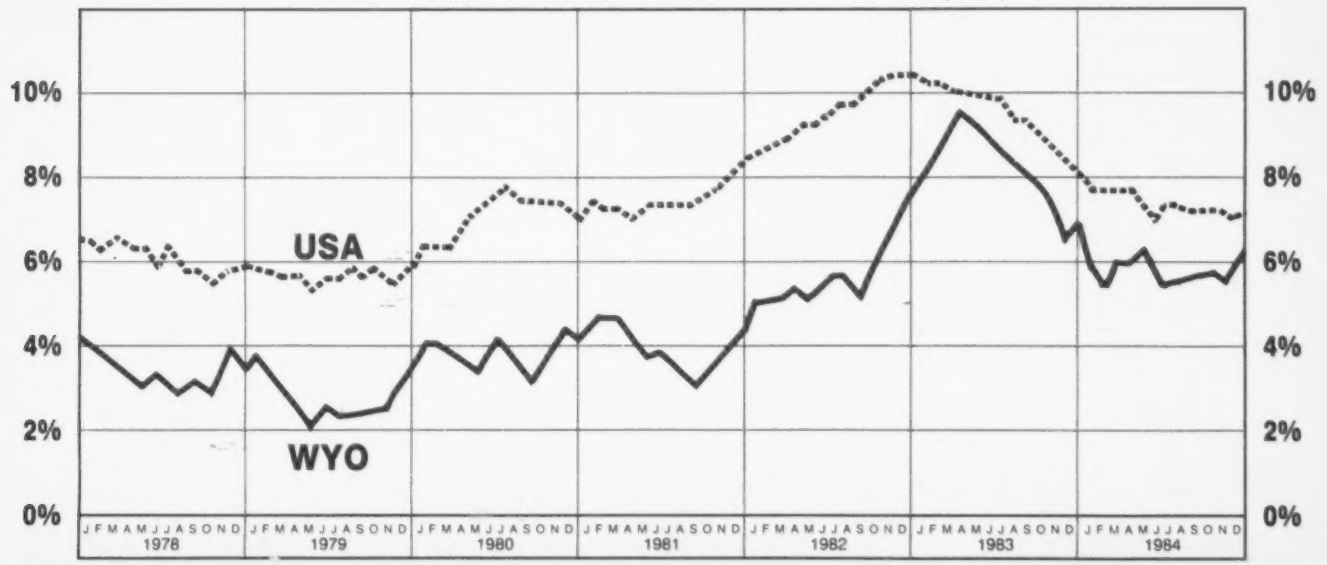
Since the recessionary trough of November 1982, civilian employment has increased by over 7 million people. Understandably then the 106.3 million people in December is a record high.

PRELIMINARY JANUARY RATES

Preliminary national estimates from the BLS for January put the number of unemployed at nearly 8.5 million or 7.4 percent of the labor force. A major reason for the increase over December could be the large number of workers who were laid off from their Christmas jobs.

On the bright side, the number of employed people also increased again to 106.4 million. This continues the trend of the nation setting employment records in almost

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, WYOMING AND THE U.S. (S.A.)



WYOMING EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION, Research & Analysis Section

every month during 1984. Should readers desire an explanation of how both employment and unemployment levels can increase simultaneously, they can contact the Research and Analysis Section and request a copy of the paper "Recent Trends in Wyoming's Unemployment."

WYOMING UNEMPLOYMENT UP IN DECEMBER

Between November and December of 1984 Wyoming's unemployment increased by over 2,000. See Table 2. The total unadjusted unemployment rate went from 5.7 to 6.4 percent. Typically there is an increase in unemployment between these two months, however, it is not usually of this magnitude. These December figures are preliminary estimates. When the final revisions are done it would not be surprising if this initial over-the-month increase of 2,000 unemployed was reduced somewhat.

Wyoming's figures for December 1984 compare favorably with the data from December of 1983. The data shows that there are 2,000 fewer unemployed people during December of 1984 compared to the same month in 1983. This translates to an unemployment rate that is nine-tenths of a percent lower.

Wyoming's seasonally adjusted figures show the same picture as the raw or unadjusted data. December's seasonally adjusted rate of 6.3 percent was 0.8 percent greater than November's, and 0.9 percent less than the December 1983 adjusted rate.

THE COUNTIES

Although the number of unemployed people in Lincoln County didn't even exceed 700, this still represented 11.4 percent of their labor force. See Table 2. Of interest is the fact that Lincoln County's neighbor, Sublette County, had the fewest jobless (91) and the second lowest unemployment rate (4.1%) of all 23 counties. Cold weather almost certainly caused lay-offs in Lincoln County's active heavy construction industry. The lowest unemployment rate for December 1984 was 3.6 percent, in Johnson County.

In terms of high employment rates, Lincoln County was followed by Niobrara, Fremont, and Teton with rates of 9.7, 9.1, and 9.0 percent respectively. Although the rate was only 6.1 percent, Natrona County had the most job seekers, nearly 2,500.

NEIGHBOR'S RATES

The most current information for all states' data is for November 1984. Montana, Idaho, and Utah had higher rates than Wyoming, recording 6.6, 6.4, and 5.9 percent respectively. The three states that had lower rates than Wyoming's 5.7 percent, were Colorado, Nebraska, and South Dakota at 5.5, 4.3, and 4.1 percent respectively.

The states with the lowest November unemployment rates were Massachusetts, at 3.4 percent, and Vermont at 3.9 percent. West Virginia had far and away the highest unemployment rate at 15.6 percent.

EMPLOYMENT, HOURS, AND EARNINGS

In the June 1984 edition of *Trends*, the Current Employment Statistics, or CES program, was explained. Table 3 reprints some of December's preliminary data from CES.

The figures show a decrease of non-farm employment of 3,400. The majority of the decrease was accounted for by layoffs in the construction industry. The severe weather of late November and December will probably hold up many of the large projects until later this spring. It is no coincidence that Lincoln County had the highest unemployment rate, it is the center of several large construction projects.

In addition to employment figures, the CES program also compiles data on hours worked and wages earned for certain industries. Wyoming compiles wage and hour information for the mining and manufacturing industries. This data makes for easy comparisons of Wyoming, other states, and the nation in terms of those variables.

The hours worked data is considered one of the significant economic indicators of this nation's economic situation. Generally, the more goods that need to be produced (economic growth) the longer the work week gets. However, increased hours in the work week doesn't always mean better business conditions. By the same token, shorter work weeks don't necessarily indicate a recessing economy. Seasonal factors are always one important consideration.

In order to meet changing demands for their products, many employers find it more economic in the short term to vary their present employees' number of hours worked than to resort to hiring or laying off. When demand calls for increased production, there is a point at which employers will add workers rather than pay the higher overtime wages.

In Wyoming, manufacturing employs less than 5 percent of the work force, while mining consistently employs around 15 percent. This explains why *Trends* ordinarily publishes the mining data but not the manufacturing. See the Trend Setters box or Table 1. Any *Trends* readers wanting average weekly or hourly earnings as well as average weekly hours worked, may contact the Research and Analysis Section.

THANK YOU PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS

In the June 1984 *Trends* we used a few paragraphs to explain the nature of the CES program in Wyoming. Because CES depends on a sample of employer's responses, and because our response rate was so low (around 1,500 employers), we made a plea to employers to cooperate with us by filling out the survey form if they could. Through hard work by our CES department and cooperation from emloyers, the sample size has been increased to approximately 2,000. Thanks much to those responding employers. However, there is always room for improvement and we are still attempting to meet Bureau of Labor Statistics standards. Because this information can be useful to business we still want to encourage anyone receiving survey forms from the Research and Analysis Section to **please take ten minutes to fill them out and return them.**

PERSONAL INCOME, THIRD QUARTER 1984

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the U.S. Commerce Department, the Rocky Mountain Region's increase of 1.6 percent in non-farm personal income from second quarter to third quarter of 1984 was the least of the nation's eight regions. However, Wyoming's increase of 2.6 percent was sixth highest among all states. Payroll increases in manufacturing, construction, mining, and government were well above the national

average. The nation's average increase over-the-quarter was 2.0 percent. Third quarter 1983 compared to third quarter 1984 showed a U.S. increase of 10.2 percent in personal income. The Rocky Mountain Region increased by 9.7 percent and Wyoming increased by 10.1 percent over-the-year.

PRE AND POST RECESSION EMPLOYMENT COMPARISONS

The three major employment and wage surveys conducted within the Research and Analysis Section are the report of Covered Employment and Wages (ES-202), based on actual employer reports; the Current Employment Statistics Survey (CES), based on a monthly employer survey; and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics report (LAUS), which is a complex statistical system for estimating employment and unemployment.

There are differences in the concepts, definitions and data used in these surveys, but they all track employment and unemployment levels and continuously monitor these trends.

Wyoming's unemployment rates during 1979 were often among the lowest in the nation, and in November 1982 the national recession finally bottomed out when unemployment hit its highest level. However, it took Wyoming's unemployment until April of 1983 to reach its peak.

Casper has yet to recover from the recession to the extent that for instance, Cheyenne or the rest of the state has. The following set of employment figures, taken from the three different employment and wage surveys, shows consistently, that Casper continues to lag the state and Cheyenne following the recession. It should be remembered, that the LAUS program involves many more estimates and does include full estimates for agriculture.

WYOMING EMPLOYMENT

	June 1979	June 1984	Percent Change
LAUS			
Statewide	232,673	256,180	10.1
Casper	38,559	38,009	- 1.4
Cheyenne	30,540	35,092	14.9
ES-202			
Statewide	194,472	196,756	1.2
Casper	37,648	33,725	- 10.4
Cheyenne	25,944	27,473	5.9
CES			
Statewide	208,200	207,200	- 0.4
Casper	39,100	34,300	- 12.3
Cheyenne	30,200	31,000	2.6

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - (1967 = 100)

ALL URBAN

	ALL ITEMS	FOOD	HOUSING	RENT	APPAREL	TRANSP.	MEDICAL
December 1984	315.5	305.1	341.2	256.1	203.2	315.8	388.5
Annual % Change	4.0	3.8	4.2	5.8	2.0	3.1	6.1

WAGE EARNERS AND CLERICAL WORKERS

	ALL ITEMS	FOOD	HOUSING	RENT	APPAREL	TRANSP.	MEDICAL
December 1984	312.2	304.7	335.0	255.3	202.1	317.9	386.7
Annual % Change	3.5	3.6	3.3	5.8	2.0	3.1	6.1

RECENT RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS PUBLICATIONS

- **1985 Wyoming Annual Planning Report;** a comprehensive analysis of labor market developments for the state and its counties.
- **State and County Summary of Covered Employment Annual Report;** gives average employment and average weekly wages by industry for the state and its counties for 1981, 1982, and 1983.
- **Third Quarter 1984 Report of Applicants and Job Openings;** comes from information supplied by Wyoming's 16 Job Service Centers entailing an analysis of job openings and applicants and characteristics of both.
- **Occupational Employment Statistics, Manufacturing and Hospitals in Wyoming: 1983;** based on a sample of these industries, this report identifies the staffing patterns and occupations comprising these industries.
- **The Statistical Review of Wyoming;** not published since the mid-1970's. This 150 page report compiles all the significant data generated by the Wyoming Employment Security Commission from 1939 to 1984.

Table 1

WYOMING ECONOMIC INDICATORS

ITEM	DEC 1984 [1]	NOV 1984 [1]	DEC 1983 [2]	Percent change From A Month Ago	Percent change From A Year Ago
WYOMING EMPLOYMENT DATA					
Total Civilian Labor Force	252,134	250,461	249,541	0.7	1.0
Unemployment	16,200	14,187	18,178	14.2	10.9
Employed Labor Force	235,934	236,274	231,363	- 0.1	2.0
a. Covered Employment (Under Wyo. UI Law)[3]	191,000	189,100	188,972	1.0	1.1
b. Agriculture[3]	10,085	11,331	10,270	- 11.0	- 1.8
Total Unemployment Rate (Wyo.) Seas. Adj.*	6.4% 6.3%*	5.7% 5.5%*	7.3% 7.2%*	XXX	XXX
Total Unemployment Rate (U.S.) Seas. Adj.*	7.0% 7.2%*	6.9% 7.1%*	8.0% 8.2%*	XXX	XXX
Insured Unemployment Rate (Wyo.)[4]	1.8%	1.8%	3.5%	XXX	XXX
HOURS & EARNINGS					
Mining (Production Workers):					
Average Weekly Earnings	$ 582.97	$ 574.86	$ 552.11	1.4	5.6
Average Weekly Hours	44.4	42.9	43.1	3.5	3.0
Average Hourly Earnings	$ 13.13	$ 13.40	$ 12.81	- 2.0	2.5
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
Claims Filed in Local Offices	17,727	16,898	34,075	4.9	- 48.0
a. Initial	2,665	3,104	3,575	- 14.1	- 25.5
Weeks Compensated	14,194	11,120	30,272	27.6	- 53.1
Total Amount Benefits Paid	$ 2,050,745	$ 1,588,035	$ 3,884,906	29.1	- 47.2
Average Weekly Benefit Payment	$ 144.48	$ 142.81	$ 128.33	1.2	12.6
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE					
New Applications Received During Month	2,572	3,929	3,409	- 34.5	- 24.6
Non-Ag. Openings Received	2,213	3,228	1,566	- 31.4	41.3
Non-Ag. Placements	2,131	3,064	2,269	30.5	- 6.1
UNITED STATES DATA					
HOURS & EARNINGS					
Mining (Production Workers):					
Average Weekly Earnings	$ 509.25	$ 502.14	$ 495.19	1.4	2.8
Average Weekly Hours	43.6	43.4	43.4	0.5	0.5
Average Hourly Earnings	$ 11.68	$ 11.57	$ 11.41	1.0	2.4
PRICE INDEXES					
Consumer Price Index 1967 = 100	315.5	315.5	303.5	0.1	4.0
Producer Prices, All Commodities	309.9	309.4	306.0	0.2	1.3
Retail Prices of Food 1967 = 100	305.1	304.1	293.9	0.3	3.8

[1] Preliminary. [2] Final. [3] Not Benchmarked to the Current Population Survey. [4] Rate does not include claimants receiving benefits under extended benefit provisions.

WYOMING
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE & UNEMPLOYMENT

Table 2

(Prepared in Cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

COUNTY	LABOR FORCE					UNEMPLOYMENT			UNEMPLOYMENT RATE		
	DEC 1984	NOV 1984	DEC 1983	%CHANGE NOV-DEC	%CHANGE DEC-DEC	DEC 1984	NOV 1984	DEC 1983	DEC 1984	NOV 1984	DEC 1983
Statewide	252,134	250,461	249,541	0.7	1.0	16,200	14,187	18,178	6.4	5.7	7.3
Albany	14,660	14,381	14,410	1.9	1.7	716	521	785	4.9	3.6	5.4
Big Horn	4,992	5,082	5,153	- 1.8	- 3.1	365	305	296	7.3	6.0	5.7
Campbell	17,428	17,839	17,853	- 2.3	- 2.4	961	931	964	5.5	5.2	5.4
Carbon	9,179	9,291	9,760	- 1.2	- 6.0	680	592	908	7.4	6.4	9.3
Converse	6,818	6,781	7,082	0.5	- 3.7	533	424	531	7.8	6.3	7.5
Crook	2,903	2,936	2,892	- 1.1	0.4	195	180	154	6.7	6.1	5.3
Fremont	18,206	17,896	19,199	1.7	- 5.2	1,655	1,260	2,277	9.1	7.0	11.9
Goshen	6,938	6,880	6,866	0.8	1.0	361	329	373	5.2	4.8	5.4
Hot Springs	2,973	2,978	2,926	- 0.2	1.6	146	131	103	4.9	4.4	3.5
Johnson	4,045	4,033	4,373	0.3	- 7.5	146	151	318	3.6	3.7	7.3
Laramie	35,822	35,669	32,772	0.4	9.3	1,900	1,686	2,535	5.3	4.7	7.7
Lincoln	6,117	6,063	5,782	0.9	5.8	695	551	578	11.4	9.1	10.0
Natrona	40,996	39,844	37,516	2.9	9.3	2,493	2,154	2,787	6.1	5.4	7.4
Niobrara	1,645	1,671	1,522	- 1.6	8.1	159	103	67	9.7	6.2	4.4
Park	12,912	12,807	12,782	0.8	1.0	798	744	582	6.2	5.8	4.6
Platte	3,685	3,691	3,998	- 0.2	- 7.8	300	279	417	8.2	7.5	10.4
Sheridan	13,658	13,485	13,819	1.3	- 1.2	1,146	934	1,166	8.4	6.9	8.4
Sublette	2,209	2,254	2,413	- 2.0	- 8.5	91	100	116	4.1	4.4	4.8
Sweetwater	19,827	19,991	21,465	- 0.8	- 7.6	1,156	1,088	1,580	5.8	5.4	7.4
Teton	7,245	7,131	7,197	1.6	0.7	653	767	566	9.0	10.8	7.9
Uinta	11,045	11,024	10,672	0.2	3.5	619	550	507	5.6	5.0	4.8
Washakie	5,242	5,198	5,369	0.8	- 2.4	237	215	341	4.5	4.1	6.4
Weston	3,590	3,535	3,720	1.6	- 3.5	196	192	227	5.5	5.4	6.1

The ESC wishes to stress that the data contained in this table are only estimates. The data for the current month is a preliminary estimate and will be revised next month, and revised yet again in about one year. On an annual average basis, the accuracy of these estimates may vary from the actual figures by as much as eight percent, plus or minus.

Table 3

NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT IN WYOMING [1]

(Prepared in Cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT (In thousands)			% Change on Total Emp.	
	DEC 1984[2]	NOV 1984[3]	DEC 1983	NOV 1984	DEC 1983
	Total	Total	Total	to DEC 1984	to DEC 1984
WYOMING NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT					
Total Non-Farm Wage & Salary Employment	197.4	200.8	202.9	- 1.7	- 2.7
Manufacturing	9.0	9.1	8.2	- 1.1	9.8
Durable Goods	4.0	4.1	3.6	- 2.4	11.1
Nondurable Goods	5.0	5.0	4.6	0.0	8.7
Petroleum & Coal Products	1.2	1.2	1.3	0.0	- 7.7
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	188.4	191.7	194.7	- 1.7	- 3.2
Mining	26.7	26.2	28.9	1.9	- 7.6
Contract Construction	15.3	18.1	16.2	15.5	- 5.6
Transportation & Public Utilities	16.4	16.6	16.3	- 1.2	0.6
Railroad Transportation	3.1	3.3	3.3	- 6.1	- 6.1
Transportation except Railroads	6.6	6.6	6.1	0.0	8.2
Comm., Elect., Gas & Sani. Serv.	6.7	6.7	6.9	0.0	- 2.9
Wholesale & Retail Trade	43.9	44.4	44.3	- 1.1	- 0.9
Wholesale Trade	8.9	8.9	8.9	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	35.0	35.5	35.4	- 1.4	- 1.1
Food Stores	5.0	5.1	4.9	- 2.0	2.0
Automotive Dealers & Serv. Stat.	5.8	6.1	5.7	- 4.9	1.8
Eating & Drinking Places	11.1	11.6	12.3	- 4.3	- 9.8
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	7.6	7.6	7.6	0.0	0.0
Services	28.6	29.0	30.0	- 1.4	- 4.7
Personal Services	1.9	2.0	1.7	- 5.0	11.8
Medical & Other Health Services	6.3	6.3	6.4	0.0	1.6
Government	49.9	49.8	51.4	0.2	- 2.9
Federal Government	6.2	6.2	6.5	0.0	- 4.6
State & Local Government	43.7	43.6	44.9	0.2	- 2.7
State Government	12.8	12.8	13.0	0.0	- 1.5
Local Government	30.9	30.8	31.9	0.3	- 3.1

(See Footnotes at End of Table)

NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT IN WYOMING [1]

Table 3 (Cont'd)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT (In thousands)			% Change on Total Emp.	
	DEC 1984[2]	NOV 1984[3]	DEC 1983	NOV 1984	DEC 1983
	Total	Total	Total	to DEC 1984	to DEC 1984
CASPER (Natrona County)					
TOTAL NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	35.2	35.1	34.6	0.3	1.7
Manufacturing	1.5	1.5	1.3	0.0	15.4
Nondurable Goods	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.0	12.5
Petroleum & Coal Products	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.0	20.0
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	33.7	33.6	33.3	0.3	1.2
Mining	5.2	5.2	4.9	0.0	6.1
Oil & Gas Extraction	4.6	4.6	4.4	0.0	4.5
Other Mining, Quarrying, etc.	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.0	20.0
Contract Construction	2.5	2.6	2.3	- 3.8	8.7
Transportation & Public Utilities	2.1	2.1	2.4	0.0	- 12.5
Wholesale & Retail Trade	9.9	9.8	9.4	1.0	5.3
Wholesale Trade	3.8	3.6	3.6	5.6	5.6
Retail Trade	6.1	6.2	5.8	- 1.6	5.2
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0
Services	5.5	5.6	5.8	- 1.8	- 5.2
Government	6.8	6.6	6.8	3.0	0.0
Federal Government	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
State & Local Government	6.2	6.0	6.2	3.3	0.0
CHEYENNE (Laramie County)					
TOTAL NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	30.5	31.2	29.7	- 2.2	2.7
Manufacturing	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
Total Non-Manufacturing Employment	29.5	30.2	28.7	- 2.3	2.8
Contract Construction	1.9	2.0	1.8	- 5.0	5.6
Transportation & Public Utilities	3.1	3.4	3.7	- 8.8	- 16.2
Wholesale & Retail Trade	7.5	7.7	6.9	- 2.6	8.7
Wholesale Trade	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.0	12.5
Retail Trade	6.6	6.8	6.1	- 2.9	8.2
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.8	1.8	1.7	0.0	5.9
Services & Miscellaneous	5.3	5.4	4.8	- 1.9	10.4
Government	9.6	9.5	9.5	1.1	0.0
Federal Government	2.4	2.4	2.3	0.0	4.3
State & Local Government	7.2	7.1	7.2	1.4	0.0

[1] Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers in non-ag. establishments who worked or received pay during the week which includes the 12th of the month. Proprietors, self-employeds, domestic servants and personnel of the armed forces are excluded. [2] Subject to revision. [3] Revised figures.

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WYOMING LABOR FORCE TRENDS

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